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ENG 3001-600: Advanced Composition

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**English 3001, Advanced Composition:
Writing in the Professional Workplace**

Summer, 2019

Professor: Tim Engles

Textbooks from EIU's Textbook Rental Service:

Writing Without Bullshit: Boost Your Career by Saying What You Mean (Bernoff)

Business and Professional Writing: A Basic Guide (MacRae)

Limbo: Blue-Collar Roots, White-Collar Dreams (Lubrano)

Working while Black: The Black Person's Guide to Success in the White Workplace, 2nd Edition (Johnson)

COURSE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Read the following sections carefully!

You are responsible for everything written here.

Description and Goals: This course is designed to improve your writing skills as you gather your forces toward a job based on your major. As a college graduate, you will work in a professional, “white-collar” environment. Your future will very likely require more writing than you realize, and the quality of your writing will definitely affect how supervisors and coworkers perceive you. In addition to getting your writing skills up to speed for a professional audience, this course will help you anticipate and deal with some of the key features of your future workplace, including those related to gender, class and race.

Because we are a smaller group than those in most EIU courses, your individual writing problems will receive close attention, both from me and from your peers. You will be assigned a peer review partner, and you must be a responsible, reliable email partner with this classmate. Finally, because we will be squeezing an entire semester's work into a short-session summer course, we'll be working at high speed—be ready to work hard in order to keep up with various readings, viewings, quizzes and writings.

For the record, here is EIU's Undergraduate Catalog description of our course:

ENG 3001 - Advanced Composition

(3-0-3) On Demand. Advanced study and practice of writing in public, professional, and discipline-specific genres. This course is open to all EIU students, but the online version of ENG 3001 is restricted to off-campus students in the Fall and Spring semesters and open to all EIU students in the Summer. WC

Prerequisites & Notes: “C” or better in ENG 1001G/1091G and ENG 1002G/1092G.

Credits: 3

Learning Objectives: The following objectives apply to all of the weekly Modules. More specifically, our learning goals include the refinement of skills in the following areas:

- **Clean, smart prose:** improve your ability to write clear, concise, and meaningful sentences, to compose organized, well-developed paragraphs, and to identify and address recurring grammatical or mechanical problems specific to your own writing (these vary from writer to writer). We will spend time talking about why a grammatically correct, clear, efficient style is key to your success in college and in professional life. You will also be encouraged to push yourself toward new realizations while writing—while good writing includes having something significant to say, it also involves discovering new thoughts and insights that may not have arisen if you had not started writing them down.
- **Professional life:** learn about some of the more subtle aspects of how people interact and collaborate in the professional workplace. We will study significant factors that influence success in professional life, including such matters as race, class, gender and sexual orientation. You will also practice a common expectation in professional life by doing a presentation that includes a carefully prepared visual component.
- **Critical reading:** improve your ability to read critically by questioning and evaluating what you read. Understanding the distinction between “opinion” and “reasoned argument” depends on your mastery of critical reading skills, which will enable you to discern and emulate the successful argumentative strategies of other writers. The better reader you are, the better writer you can be. In order to be a better reader, you have to participate in what you are reading, actively deciphering the argument in all its parts, rather than passively receiving strings of words. Regular quizzes will help to boost your skills in this area.
- **Minding your p’s and q’s:** misused words, missing commas, lack of subject/verb agreement, missing quotation marks, poorly incorporated quotations and inaccurate citations, misused semicolons . . . remember those bugaboos? Students sometimes complain that such “minor” mistakes in their papers are graded too heavily. However, they are important, so they will also be graded heavily in this course. Again, this course is meant to get your writing skills up to speed for professional life. *All of you are sure to write regularly during your careers*, and errors that students often consider “minor” actually stand out in professional life—they look sloppy and careless, and even worse, they can make the *writer* look sloppy and careless. Thus, I will work with you to find and eliminate your own habitual errors, and we will conduct workshops and brief grammar lessons on the most common errors in advanced student writing.
- **Collaborative learning:** improve your ability to learn from others and to teach them about your own thinking, as well as what you know about writing. As in most professional settings, much of your success in this course will depend on the combined processes of producing several drafts of your writing and working with others, via peer critiques. You will also practice forming honest, thorough, and constructive commentary on your peers' writing, a process that will in turn improve your own writing skills.

Technical requirements: Students in this course should already have taken the D2L Student Orientation. Students must have regular access to the Internet while using a laptop or desktop computer. Students must know how to download and upload email attachments, install software, and (if requesting an individual conference) use a webcam and microphone. Papers must be submitted in Microsoft Word; D2L cannot open papers submitted, for example, with Apple's word processing program (which is called Pages). You also must have access to and be able to use Adobe Reader or Preview (for Macs).

A note about reading: Since one skill you will be developing in this course is the art of textual analysis, you must give our readings and viewings more than a quick skimming over. Instead of wolfing them down and rushing to complete them, set aside enough time on a regular basis to read and view carefully. Consider taking notes as you read, and then decide for yourself what each author is trying to describe and bring to light. In an online course, especially a condensed, fast-paced summer version, you are also responsible for pacing yourself as you read throughout the semester, establishing your own schedule so that you complete reading (and other) assignments on time.

Attendance Policy: To some extent, you will be able to work at your own pace in this online course. However, you must meet various work deadlines, including work assignments with classmates, which will include posting by deadlines in discussion forums and conducting peer reviews via email with a classmate on each other's writings. I can tell who is posting regularly in Discussion Forums **and** who is regularly reading other student posts. Your participation in these and other ways will constitute a major portion of your final grade.

Grades, assignments, and deadlines: Unless otherwise indicated, I will grade assignments within three days of their due date. All assignments in this course will be graded on a 100-point scale (90-100 = A, 80-89 = B, etc.), and your final course grade will be determined in the following way. Note that "class participation" includes not only written Discussion forum posts, but also the reading of significant numbers of posts by other students, the reading of instructor comments on your graded writings, and the complete viewing of each of the instructor's recorded presentations and other videos (remember, I have background ways of seeing whether you are regularly doing each of these activities).

- 15% Essay on the writing that you will do in your career
- 20% An example of public writing that you could do in the future regarding the effects of gender, class or race in your future career
- 10% Two peer critiques of a classmate's writings
- 25% Final Project: sample job-seeking documents & a written self-critique of them
- 20% Quizzes & Discussion Forums
- 10% Final major quiz/mini exam (on the content of our daily grammar lessons and two writing workshops)

Regarding late papers: Again, papers and other assignments will be graded on a 100-point scale, and late papers will be penalized fifteen points for each day they are late, beginning one hour after the time that they are due. All assignments are due by 11:59 pm on their due date.

General grading rubric: We will assess a sample student essay along with the rubric used by EIU instructors as they grade writing assignments—more on that particular rubric soon. More generally, your assignments in this course will be graded in the following terms; see below for a rubric specific to class participation:

A grade of A indicates work that is truly outstanding in every way. In addition to completely and promptly following the guidelines for the assignment, work that receives an A grade provides a depth of analysis that adds substantive insight to the conversation surrounding the literary text and/or related issues. This level of work engages deeply with the themes, issues and ideas involved in a particular text and often links those themes, issues and ideas to the larger ones reflected in our overall course. In this way, such work helps all who read it understand the literary text and/or related issues better and more deeply. A-level work is rare, and it should be noted that merely writing MORE than what was assigned does not necessarily merit a grade of A.

A grade of B indicates that, in addition to completing the assignment on time and completely, you have provided a depth of insight and analysis that shows that you have thought deeply about the assignment and its implications, that you have engaged actively with the reading or viewing, have thought carefully about it, and that this thought is reflected in clear, cogent and insightful writing. Such work engages with deeper meanings of the text, perhaps by connecting it to others and with some overall themes of our course. In other words, B-level work does more than simply complete the assignment; it engages deeply with the assignment. Again, it should be noted that merely writing MORE than what was assigned does not necessarily merit a grade of B.

A grade of C indicates that you have completed the assignment as required in an adequate, satisfactory and punctual manner. All necessary components of the assignment are present and completed according to what was required. The writing is clear and grammatically correct. In other words, merely doing the assignment adequately and on time will earn you a grade of C.

A grade of D indicates that the work does not meet the requirements of the assignment in some major respect(s). Although parts of the assignment may be satisfactory, an assignment that merits a D is incomplete or does not otherwise adequately address the requirements of the assignment. In other words, work might be given a D if it does not engage adequately with the question or the literary text in question. Note that a grade of D may be given to work that partially completes the assignment, but is incomplete.

A grade of F indicates that the assignment is either extremely incomplete or that it does nothing to engage with the question asked or with the literary text being discussed.

Regarding Discussion Forums: Since we cannot meet in person, and since there are too many of us to arrange synchronous meetings online, our Discussion Forums will be an extremely important way for us to discuss our course materials together. Notice above that class participation is a large part of your final grade; below is a rubric that I will use for grading your participation. I will not assign a grade to each of your posts, but I will be closely watching, and

participating in, our Discussion Forums. Be aware that just as listening to others in an in-person classroom is important, so too is reading posts by other students. D2L allows me to see how often you do so (just as it allows me to see whether you watch the Recorded Presentations), and I can also tell when a student hastily dips in and out of Forums, merely dropping in their own posts and merely doing the minimal amount of required replies to others. On the other hand, be wary of writing overly long posts; do write enough to get your well-supported points across, but also be aware that writing *a lot* will mean that your post will largely go unread.

Discussion Forum Grading Rubric

<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Grade: A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>D</i>
<i>Response to Prompt</i>	Brought new, well-supported understanding to discussion of the prompt's topic	Good response but could have been more clearly connected to prompt	Attempted adequate response but may have missed main idea or wandered too far from topic	Post(s) not made at all, or not at all connected to topic
<i>Replies to other students (when required)</i>	Clear, direct and detailed engagement with other students; specific references to others' ideas; reads most posts by others	Engaged with other students but could have been more specific or original	Engagement with other students minimal, very brief, or vague; reads very few posts by others beyond those replied to	Missing or extremely weak replies; doesn't read posts by others
<i>Language</i>	Proper use of clear, mostly error-free language; appropriately professional communication	Language could have been clearer or more polished at some points	Communication is weak, unclear, or highly inappropriate in an academic setting	Breaking of basic rules of appropriate communication in an academic environment OR post was not made
<i>Evidence</i>	Clear connections made to specific parts of texts, with solid supporting evidence	Some good evidence, but lacking in examples and specificity	Little supporting evidence from texts presented	Misunderstood nature of evidence or lacked evidence entirely
<i>Timeliness</i>	Post and any required replies met deadlines	One deadline or one component may have been missed	Deadlines were missed or did not include all requirements	Post(s) extremely late or missed entirely

Email Activity: Enrollment in this class requires use of your D2L email account, and you must check it frequently for messages pertaining to the course (that is, every day). We will use D2L for announcements and assignments. You should also stay alert to notifications of new emails from Dr. Engles, and to any new News items on our course's front page. Email is the quickest, easiest way to reach me, and I welcome any and all emailed questions and comments—I always respond within 24 hours, and usual much sooner. Finally, it's okay to also use my regular email address if you prefer: tdengles@eiu.edu (though be aware that you can't write to outside email addresses from inside D2L).

Academic integrity: Remember also that this course follows the Academic Integrity policy followed by all Eastern Illinois University students. Plagiarism and cheating are not tolerated, and the consequences are severe. For any concerns you might have in this area, see EIU's Code of Conduct. If you have specific questions about whether any particular method you want to use might violate this code, be sure to ask Dr. Engles about it, either by email or during his online office hours.

Information for Students with Disabilities: If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Student Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible. Also, of course, let me know about it and about what I can do to help accommodate your needs.

Help with course content and procedures: As explained in the Introduction Module, our course has a "Need Help?" Discussion Forum where students can ask questions about the course that I (Dr. Engles) can likely answer. Asking a question there about course content and procedures is a good idea, because others (who may well have the same question) will be able to see my answers. If you have questions that you want to ask me individually, email is of course okay, preferably to tdengles@eiu.edu. Unless otherwise indicated, I will respond to the "Need Help?" Discussion Forum questions and any student email within twenty-four hours (and usually much sooner).

Technical Support: As noted above, students in this course should already have taken the D2L Student Orientation. In order to succeed in this online course, your skills should include (but are not limited to): navigating an online course management system (in this case, D2L), composing emails, accessing online files and web links, submitting properly formatted assignments via the D2L Dropbox system, and producing a PowerPoint presentation with recorded audio.

For technical support with D2L, you can contact the ITS Help Desk at 217-581-4357 or itshelp@eiu.edu or CATS Training Services for Students at 217-581-8358.

Academic Honesty: I expect you to act honestly and do your own work in this class, and so does Eastern Illinois University. English 3001 is primarily a skills course, and doing your own work will definitely improve skills that you can then carry into your career. It is also your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the English Department's policy on plagiarism: "Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—'The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one's original work' (*Random House Dictionary of the English Language*)—has the right and the responsibility to

impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office.”